United Nations A/58/492

General Assembly

Distr.: General
18 December 2003
English
Original: Spanish

Fifty-eighth session
Agenda item 102

Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

Report of the Second Committee

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I. Introduction

1. At its 2nd meeting, on 19 September 2003, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its fifty-eighth session the item entitled "Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries" and to allocate it to the Second Committee.

2. The Second Committee considered the item at its 28th, 29th, 34th and 37th meetings, on 6, 7 and 12 November and 11 December 2003. An account of the Committee's discussion of the item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/58/SR.28, 29, 34 and 37). Attention is also drawn to the general debate held by the Committee at its 2nd to 6th meetings, from 6 to 9 October (see A/C.2/57/SR.2-6).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries (A/58/86-E/2003/81);

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on the participation of the least developed countries at the annual substantive sessions of the Economic and Social Council (A/58/532);

(c) Letter dated 3 October 2003 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the final communiqué of the annual coordination meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, held at United Nations Headquarters on 30 September 2003 (A/58/415-S/2003/952);

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(d) Letter dated 2 October 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the declaration and the statement on Palestine adopted by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Non-Aligned Movement at their meeting held at United Nations Headquarters on 26 September 2003 (A/58/420);

(e) Letter dated 13 October 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a document entitled "Italy's contribution to the enhanced HIPC initiative" (A/58/437).

4. At the 28th meeting, on 6 November, the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States made an introductory statement (see A/C.2/58/SR.28).

II. Consideration of draft resolutions A/C.2/58/L.34 and A/C.2/58/L.68

5. At the 34th meeting, on 12 November, the representative of Morocco, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries" (A/C.2/58/L.34), which read:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Recalling* its resolution 55/279 of 12 July 2001, in which it endorsed the Brussels Declaration and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010, and its resolution 57/276 of 20 December 2002 on the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries,

"*Reaffirming* its resolution 55/2 of 8 September 2000, by which it adopted the Millennium Declaration, in particular its paragraph 15 in which the heads of State and Government undertook to address the special needs of the least developed countries,

"*Recalling* Economic and Social Council decision 2001/320 of 24 October 2001, in which it decided to establish a regular sub-item entitled 'Review and coordination of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010',

"*Recalling also* Economic and Social Council resolution 2003/17 of 22 July 2003, in which the Council took note of the progress report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries,

"*Taking note* of Economic and Social Council decision 2003/287 of 24 July 2003, in which the Council adopted the theme 'Resource mobilization and enabling environment for poverty eradication in the context of the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action for Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010', as the theme of its high-level segment of 2004,

"*Taking note also* of the report of the Secretary-General,

"1. *Expresses its deep concern* over the weak implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010, and expresses its expectation of more vigorous implementation by all partners;

"2. *Reiterates* that the Programme of Action offers a framework for partnership, based on mutual commitments by least developed countries and their developed partners to undertake concrete actions for the implementation of all the measures set out in the Programme of Action;

"3. *Calls on* the development partners of the least developed countries, including multilateral financial institutions, to honour their commitments regarding the effective and expeditious implementation of the Programme of Action;

"4. *Urges* the developed countries that have not yet done so to make concrete efforts to implement effectively their commitments on official development assistance to the least developed countries, as contained in paragraph 83 of the Programme of Action;

"5. *Urges* the least developed countries and their development partners to make the Programme of Action an effective tool for the implementation of the poverty reduction strategies at the national level for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;

"6. *Invites* the United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions and all other international organizations, within their respective mandates, to support, as a priority, the implementation of the Programme of Action, including programmes of financial and technical cooperation devoted to the least developed countries in support of their national development programmes, including their poverty reduction strategies;

"7. *Stresses* the need for the effective implementation of the Programme of Action and its annual assessment at the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council, and recognizes in this regard the critical importance of the participation of the least developed countries in the assessment process of the Programme of Action;

"8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to defray the cost of the participation of two government representatives from each least developed country in the annual assessment of the Programme of Action by the Economic and Social Council;

"9. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to take appropriate measures, with the full participation of regional economic commissions and relevant United Nations bodies, to support the participation of the least developed countries in international meetings, as well as in their preparation and consultation processes;

"10. *Stresses* the urgent need for the mobilization of extrabudgetary resources for the implementation of the Programme of Action, invites, in this regard, contributions from multilateral and bilateral donors, and requests the Secretary-General to seek funding from all possible sources for this purpose;

"11. *Emphasizes* the importance of coordinating action within the United Nations system for the implementation of the Programme of Action, and calls on the Secretary-General to take appropriate measures to strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States to fulfil its functions in accordance with resolution 56/227 of 24 December 2001;

"12. *Calls on* the Secretary-General to submit, through the Economic and Social Council, an annual progress report on the implementation of the Programme of Action in a more analytical and results-oriented way by putting greater emphasis on concrete results and indicating the progress achieved in its implementation."

6. At the 37th meeting, on 11 December, the Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, Ulrika Cronenberg-Mossberg (Sweden), introduced a draft resolution entitled "Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries" (A/C.2/58/L.68), which she submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/58/L.34.

7. At the same meeting, the Committee had before it a statement of the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.2/58/L.34, submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly (A/C.2/58/L.45).

8. Also at the same meeting, the Director of the Division of General Assembly and Economic and Social Affairs read out a statement of programme budget implications arising from draft resolution A/C.2/58/L.68 (see A/C.2/58/SR.37).

9. Also at the 37th meeting, the Committee was informed that the statement of programme budget implications, as contained in document A/C.2/58/L.45, no longer applied.

10. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/58/L.68 (see para. 12).

11. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/58/L.68, draft resolution A/C.2/58/L.34 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

III. Recommendation of the Second Committee

12. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 55/279 of 12 July 2001, in which it endorsed the Brussels Declaration[1] and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010,[2] and its resolution 57/276 of 20 December 2002 on the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries,

Reaffirming its resolution 55/2 of 8 September 2000, by which it adopted the United Nations Millennium Declaration, in particular paragraph 15 thereof, in which the heads of State and Government undertook to address the special needs of the least developed countries,

Recalling Economic and Social Council decision 2001/320 of 24 October 2001, in which the Council decided to establish a regular sub-item entitled "Review and coordination of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010",

Recalling also Economic and Social Council resolution 2003/17 of 22 July 2003, in which the Council took note of the progress report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries,[3]

Taking note of Economic and Social Council decision 2003/287 of 24 July 2003, in which the Council adopted the theme "Resources mobilization and enabling environment for poverty eradication in the context of the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010", as the theme of its high-level segment of 2004,

Taking note also of the report of the Secretary-General,[3]

1. *Expresses its deep concern* over the weak implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010,[2] and expresses its expectation of more vigorous implementation by all partners;

2. *Reiterates* that the Programme of Action offers a framework for partnership, based on mutual commitments by least developed countries and their development partners, to undertake concrete actions in a number of interlinked areas set out in the Programme of Action;

3. *Calls upon* the least developed countries to continue, with the support of their development partners, to fulfil their commitments and to promote the implementation of the actions contained in the Programme of Action by translating

[1] A/CONF.191/12.
[2] A/CONF.191/11.
[3] A/58/86-E/2003/81.

them into specific measures within their national development frameworks and poverty eradication strategies, in particular poverty reduction strategy papers, where they exist, with the involvement of civil society, including the private sector, on the basis of a broad-based inclusive dialogue, as well as to continue to promote an enabling environment for the effective mobilization and utilization of resources consistent with paragraph 82 of the Programme of Action;

4. *Calls upon* the development partners of the least developed countries, including the multilateral financial institutions, to fulfil their commitments regarding the effective and expeditious implementation of the Programme of Action, and urges the developed countries that have not yet done so to make concrete efforts to effectively implement their commitments on official development assistance to the least developed countries, as contained in paragraph 83 of the Programme of Action;

5. *Urges* the least developed countries and their development partners to make the Programme of Action an effective tool for the implementation of the poverty reduction strategies at the national level for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration;

6. *Invites* the United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions, and all other international organizations, within their respective mandates, to support as a priority the implementation of the Programme of Action, including programmes of financial and technical cooperation devoted to the least developed countries in support of their national development programmes, including their poverty reduction strategies;

7. *Stresses* the need for the effective implementation of the Programme of Action and its annual assessment at the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council, and recognizes in this regard the critical importance of the participation of the least developed countries in the assessment process of the Programme of Action;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take appropriate measures to facilitate the participation of government representatives from the least developed countries in the annual assessment by the Economic and Social Council of the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 within the context of the overall financial provisions established by the General Assembly in its resolution 1798 (XVII) of 11 December 1962 and subsequent amendments;

9. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to take appropriate measures, within existing resources and with the full participation of the regional commissions and relevant United Nations bodies, to support the participation of the least developed countries in international meetings, as well as in their preparation and consultation processes;

10. *Emphasizes* the importance of coordinating action within the United Nations system for the implementation of the Programme of Action, and calls upon the Secretary-General to take appropriate measures to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States to

fulfil its functions in accordance with General Assembly resolution 56/227 of 24 December 2001;

11. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General to submit, through the Economic and Social Council, an annual progress report on the implementation of the Programme of Action in a more analytical and results-oriented way by placing greater emphasis on concrete results and indicating the progress achieved in its implementation.